

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method for producing a speech rendition of text comprising:

 parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words;

 comparing at least one word of the plurality of words to a list of pre-recorded words;

in the event that the compared word is not on the list of pre-recorded words,

determining whether the compared word includes at least one number, and

audibly spelling the compared word out in the event that the compared word

includes at least one number;

 in the event that the compared ~~[[a]] word of the plurality of words~~ is not on the list of pre-recorded words and does not include at least one number,

 dividing the compared word into a plurality of diphones,

 combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones, and

 playing the combined sound files; ~~[[and]]~~

 in the event that the compared word is on the list of pre-recorded words, playing a sound file corresponding to the compared word, the sound file being independent of the sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones.

Claim 2 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising:

 adding inflection to at least one word of the plurality of words in accordance with the punctuation of the sentence.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein the step of dividing the compared word into a plurality of diphones comprises comparing combinations of letters in the compared word to a database of diphones.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A method for producing a speech rendition of text comprising:
providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being determined based on letters that precede and succeed the particular letter, at least one word of the predetermined group of words including two or more letters that collectively have a single phonetic representation, wherein a first letter of the two or more letters is represented by a phoneme that corresponds to the single phonetic representation and wherein remaining letters of the two or more letters are represented by blank phonemes;
parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words;
dividing each word of the plurality of words into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database;
combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones; and
playing the combined sound files.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The method of claim 4, further comprising:
adding inflection to at least one word of the plurality of words in accordance with the punctuation of the sentence.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The method of claim 4, wherein the step of dividing each word of the plurality of words into a plurality of diphones comprises comparing combinations of letters in each word of the plurality of words to the combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, further comprising:
comparing at least a second [[one]] word of the plurality of words to a list of homographs;
in the event that the second [[a]] word of the plurality of words is on the list of homographs,
determining parts of speech for words adjacent the second word,

selecting a sound file for the second word based on the parts of speech of the adjacent words, and
playing the selected sound file.

Claim 8 (cancelled)

Claim 9 (currently amended): A [[The]] method for producing a speech rendition of text of claim 1, further comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being determined based on letters that precede and succeed the particular letter, at least one word of the predetermined group of words including two or more letters that collectively have a single phonetic representation, wherein a first letter of the two or more letters is represented by a phoneme that corresponds to the single phonetic representation and wherein remaining letters of the two or more letters are represented by blank phonemes;

parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words;

comparing at least one word of the plurality of words to a list of pre-recorded words;

in the event that the compared word is not on the list of pre-recorded words,

~~wherein the step of dividing the word into a plurality of diphones comprises~~

dividing the compared word into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database,[[.]]

combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones, and

playing the combined sound files;

in the event that the compared word is on the list of pre-recorded words, playing a sound file corresponding to the compared word, the sound file being independent of the sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones.

Claim 10 (cancelled)

Claim 11 (currently amended): A [[The]] method [[of claim 9,]] for producing a speech rendition of text comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on three letters that precede and three letters that succeed the particular letter;

parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words;

comparing at least one word of the plurality of words to a list of pre-recorded words;

in the event that the compared word is not on the list of pre-recorded words,

dividing the compared word into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database,

combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones, and

playing the combined sound files;

in the event that the compared word is on the list of pre-recorded words, playing a sound file corresponding to the compared word, the sound file being independent of the sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones.

Claim 12 (currently amended): A [[The]] method [[of claim 9,]] for producing a speech rendition of text comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on one letter that precedes and two letters that succeed the particular letter;

parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words;

comparing at least one word of the plurality of words to a list of pre-recorded words;

in the event that the compared word is not on the list of pre-recorded words,

dividing the compared word into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database,

combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones, and
playing the combined sound files;

in the event that the compared word is on the list of pre-recorded words, playing a sound
file corresponding to the compared word, the sound file being independent of the sound files
corresponding to the plurality of diphones.

Claim 13 (cancelled)

Claim 14 (currently amended): A [[The]] method [[of claim 4,]] for producing a speech
rendition of text comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a
predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words
being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being wherein
the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on three letters that
precede and three letters that succeed the particular letter;

parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words;

dividing each word of the plurality of words into a plurality of diphones based on
combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database;

combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones; and

playing the combined sound files.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A [[The]] method [[of claim 4,]] for producing a speech
rendition of text comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a
predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words
being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being wherein
the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on one letter that precedes
and two letters that succeed the particular letter;

parsing a sentence into punctuation and a plurality of words;

dividing each word of the plurality of words into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database;
combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones; and
playing the combined sound files.

Claim 16 (currently amended): A method for producing a speech rendition of text comprising:
parsing a sentence into a plurality of words;
comparing a first word of the plurality of words to a list of homographs;
in the event that the first word is on the list of homographs,
determining parts of speech for words adjacent the first word,
selecting a sound file for the first word based on the parts of speech of the adjacent words, the sound file being independent of sound files corresponding to diphones associated with the first word, and
playing the selected sound file;
in the event that the first word is not on the list of homographs, comparing the first word to a list of pre-recorded words;
in the event that the first word is not on the list of homographs and is not on the list of pre-recorded words,
dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones,
combining sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones, and
playing the combined sound files; [[and]]
in the event that the first word is not on the list of homographs and is on the list of pre-recorded words, playing a sound file corresponding to the first word, the sound file being independent of the sound files corresponding to the plurality of diphones.

Claim 17 (currently amended): The method of claim 16, further comprising:
in the event that the first word is not on the list of pre-recorded words and prior to dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones,
determining whether the first word includes at least one number, and

audibly spelling the first word out instead of dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones, combining sound files, and playing the combined sound files in the event that the first word includes at least one number.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The method of claim 16, further comprising:

providing a letter to phoneme rules database containing phonetic representations of a predetermined group of words, each letter of each word in the predetermined group of words being represented by a corresponding phoneme, the phoneme for a particular letter being determined based on letters that precede and succeed the particular letter;

wherein the step of dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones comprises dividing the first word into a plurality of diphones based on combinations of letters in the letter to phoneme rules database.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The method of claim 18, wherein at least one word of the predetermined group of words includes two or more letters that collectively have a single phonetic representation, wherein a first letter of the two or more letters is represented by a phoneme that corresponds to the single phonetic representation, and wherein remaining letters of the two or more letters are represented by blank phonemes.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The method of claim 18, wherein the corresponding phoneme for a particular letter is determined based on three letters that precede and three letters that succeed the particular letter.